

~~TOP SECRET~~

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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DIA and DOS review(s)
completed.

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SUMMARY

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NEAR EAST

3. New Soviet activity reported in Egypt and in Israel (page 4).
4. Problems in the Suez Canal area reportedly increasing (page 4).

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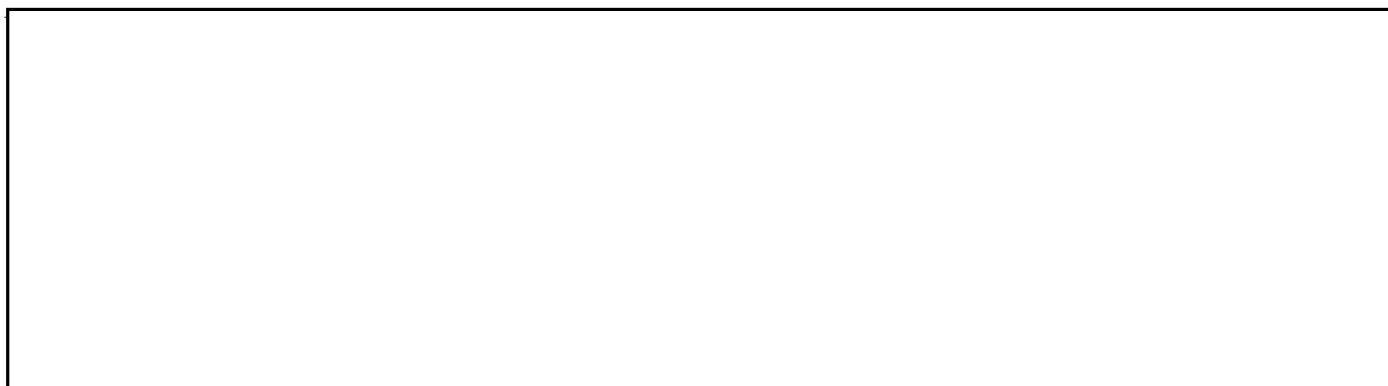
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NEAR EAST

3. New Soviet activity reported in Egypt and in Israel:

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The Soviet Union is shipping arms into Cairo according to [redacted]
He also stated that he had "positive information" that the Israeli Government has agreed to permit the USSR the use of the airfield at Ramleh, near Tel Aviv.

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Comment: The US Embassy in Cairo was told [redacted] that in a recent conversation with the Soviet Minister, the Foreign Minister raised the subject of supplies of Czech arms for Egypt. Rumors of Czech arms for Egypt are currently circulating in Cairo, but there is no evidence that any Soviet or Satellite military equipment has been delivered or contracted for.

There is no other information available on the alleged Israeli-Soviet deal. It is unlikely that the Israeli Government will make any air arrangements with the USSR except strictly standard commercial ones.

4. Problems in the Suez Canal area reportedly increasing:

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An officer of the US Embassy in Cairo, after a two-day trip through the Suez Canal zone, reports an increase in the problems facing the [redacted]

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authorities there. The British Commanding General in the zone admitted that about 3,000 Egyptian families were leaving the zone daily in spite of British efforts to slow down the exodus of laborers.

The British Naval Commander in Port Said asserts that British naval personnel can keep Suez Canal traffic operating without any real delay. In Port Said, however, the situation is worsening, with normal sources of employment shut off, food prices soaring and the tempers of 140,000 Arabs rising. The Egyptian Governor warns that the situation is developing to the point that local Egyptians might go "after him as well as the British."

Comment: While the day-to-day estimates vary considerably, there is nevertheless mounting evidence that the tension within Egypt is serious and likely to worsen. Even though the King and certain moderate elements in the government have indicated a desire to counteract this trend, it is questionable whether anything constructive can be done as long as the present emotional state continues.

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